Another Apple product that attracted my attention this year was the QuickTake digital camera. I am not a huge fan of collecting family photos on my hard drive, but for the growing number of people who are busy publishing to the Net, creating World Wide Web Home Pages, a digital camera is a necessary tool.

For telecommunications hardware, the **Global Village Teleport** series continues to shine as high-quality, reliable hardware. It also comes with easy-to-use fax software. Reflecting this higher quality is a slightly higher price, but it's worth it. For example, initially, after connecting a Teleport Gold external modem for my Mac it did not work properly. I called tech support and we narrowed down the problem to the modem itself. Global Village FedEx'ed me a replacement along with a pre-paid form for returning the troubled modem. I now agree with the crowd of people who swear the extra bucks are worth it.

This year, I also bought a competitively priced **US Robotics 14.4** external fax modem for my father. Once I convinced him to "get online", I set him up with a modem. Unobtrusive, with an on/off switch and volume button on the front panel, the USR Sportster is also an excellent choice. (1-800-342-5877)

Software:

This year our office made a leap forward on the communications front by installing internal email. **Snap Mail, by Casady & Greene** (408/484-9928), is as easy to use as you could imagine. In fact, it was installed without warning during the night on everyone's computer. There was a short memo letting us know it was there and a brief description on how to use Snap Mail. Other than that, there was no training. Within a few weeks Snap Mail had become a critical part of how the office communicates.

For communicating to the larger world via telecommunications, I have loyally been using **MicroPhone,** from Software Ventures. But posing a serious challenge is a new application from Aladdin called **SITcomm.** However, after working with SITcomm for several months, I proved that people have a strong tendency to stay with what they know. I returned to MicroPhone, where I'd already learned how to do a given set of tasks.

For people who have not yet been indoctrinated through experience to a particular telecommunications application, listen to what your friends have to say, but take a look at SITcomm before making a final decision.

Online:

Whether you read about the Internet or are online, you have not been able to ignore the buzz surrounding the World Wide Web. Overly simplified, the Web is a hypertext system for publishing to the net. **NCSA Mosaic,** a freely available graphical reader to the Web, changed how people work with the Web.

The full impact of the wildfire started by NCSA Mosaic has yet to be witnessed, but a couple of effects are already visible. The demand for Mosaic has spawned a host of competing applications, including NCSA Mosaic (still freely available on the Net), **Enhanced NCSA Mosaic** (an improved, officially licensed version available from Spyglass, 217/355-6000), **Netscape** (created by some of the original Mosaic team), and others.

The major new company in this area is Netscape Communications Corp., cofounded by Silicon Graphics founder Jim Clark and Marc Andreessen, coleader of the original Mosaic team.

The other major impact from the demand to access the Web and use Mosaic-type software has been in the type of access to the Internet we use. No longer is a traditional dial-up connection to a local service provider sufficient to use Mosaic or other higher-level software for working on the Internet. You now needed a SLIP or PPP connection and at least a 14.4Kbps modem.

In the face of dire predictions of overloading the Internet, the demand for SLIP/PPP connections has helped to lower the prices. One of my favorite services, IGC (**Institute for Global Communications,** 415/442-0220), now includes SLIP at no additional charge. (They are also adjusting their price structure to generally lower the connect charges.)

Kevin Savetz

Kevin's 10 Favorite Internet Books

One hundred and sixty books. That's how many books are listed in the Unofficial Internet Booklist, a bibliography of books about the Internet. I publish the Booklist online. It's free to anyone who wants to know about 160 books that have to do with the Internet.

If you ran to the bookstore today and bought the lot of them, they'd cost you about $4000. If you even managed to get them home, you'll have about fifty thousand pages to pore through.

I'm guessing that most readers would rather not spend $4000 on Internet books, and would certainly rather not read fifty thousand pages of anything. So here are my ten favorite Internet books. Go to your bookstore and pick up some (or all) of them, and

continued on page 138

COMPUTER SHOPPING MADE EASY

The MicroTimes Quotation Hotline: It's Free, Easy and Convenient!

Whether you work for a large corporation or are buying for your personal use, the MicroTimes Quotation Hotline can help you gather pricing ***Information Quickly, Easily and for Free*** from a wide variety of computer resellers through the support of *MicroTimes* magazine.

Just fill out the form on the opposite page so you can receive information directly from our advertisers on the exact computer products you are interested in. Our advertisers will respond to your requests directly by fax, phone, mail, or e-mail...whichever way you choose.

To ensure accuracy, please read the following information and instructions:

1. All requests for quotation must use the form attached so that the Optical Reading software (OCR) can read it accurately. Do not send requests for quotation on your own letterhead because the software will not read any other text except for the text areas provided in the form.

2. Please fill in all the information legibly. By filling in the boxes neatly and legibly our OCR software can read your requests for quotation accurately. This will also ensure that your request is easier for advertisers to respond to your needs.

3. Do not cut inside the dotted line.

4. If you are asking for multiple systems and/or computer products in the same category but with different specifications, please use additional forms. This will ensure that your requests for quotation will be responded to accurately and without any confusion from *MicroTimes* advertisers.

5. Be familiar with the particular computer products you are interested in. Be specific about the various products, system processors, speeds, hard drive sizes, features, as well as the particular configuration that you are interested in. This will ensure that you get an accurate response.

When You're Finished, Please Fax The Completed Form To:

1-800-496-8008

continued from page 32

you'll enjoy the best of the best. These are in no particular order, because, well, I couldn't decide.

1. ***Internet Starter Kit for Macintosh, second edition***
By Adam Engst
Published by Hayden Books
ISBN 1-56830-064-6, $29.95
I used to think that this was absolutely the best Internet book for Macintosh users that was ever—or could ever be—written. Then the second edition came out and proved me wrong.

This book claims to be "everything you need to get on the Internet" and it delivers: everything from the software you'll need to get connected, to one thousand pages of copious knowledge. This is a fun, enlightening, excellent book. If you own a Mac and are on the Internet (or want to connect) this is the one to get.

2. ***The Internet Business Guide: Riding the Information Superhighway to Profit***
By Rosalind Resnick and Dave Taylor
Published by Sams Publishing
ISBN 0-672-30530-5, $25
Suddenly, everyone seems to be a self-proclaimed expert on how to do business on the Internet, so a half dozen books on the topic have appeared on bookshelves. Of the various books on doing business on the Internet, *The Internet Business Guide: Riding the Information Superhighway to Profit* is by far the best. By reading this book, you'll find out how to use the Internet to build market share, track down business leads, communicate with colleagues, and search online databases.

The book makes extensive use of real-life case studies to show how doing business on the Net can succeed—and fail. It covers aspects of business on the Net thoroughly and from unique angles, such as offering cost-effective customer support and exploring the options of setting up an online shop. If you've ever thought about using the Internet for your business, read this book first.

3. ***Internet Slick Tricks***
By Alfred and Emily Glossbrenner
Published by Random House
ISBN 0-679-75611-6
270 pages, $16.00
If you've been on the Internet forever (or at least for a couple months) and you think you know it all, pick up *Internet Slick Tricks*. I bet you'll learn something new. This slim guide will show you hundreds of tips and tricks on using the Internet. It's readable and honest and full of fascinating facts on decoding graphic images, using Archie, finding info online, and much more.

4. ***Your Internet Consultant—The FAQs of Life Online***
By Kevin M. Savetz
Published by Sams
ISBN 0-672-30520-8
550 pages, $25
If you're reading this blatant plug for my own book, then this article has squeezed by my (intelligent and talented!) editor, Mary.

Your Internet Consultant—The FAQs of Life Online provides simple, enlightening answers to hundreds (361, to be exact) of frequently asked questions about the Internet. The book is unique because it is arranged in a question-and-answer format, making it blissfully simple to find just the information you need. *Your Internet Consultant* covers questions asked by users at every level, like "How can I send email to Congress?", "Where can I find games online?", and "How can I fall in love on the Internet?"

5. ***The Complete Idiot's Guide to the Internet***
By Peter Kent
Published by Alpha Books
ISBN 1-56761-414-0, $19.95
I have an aversion to books that treat the reader like a moron—or, even worse, that assume the reader himself thinks he's a moron. However, I discovered that this is actually a handy book for the beginner. It explains in a straightforward way how to get on the Internet, use the basic tools, and avoid many all-too-common traps. It teaches the Internet as a series of easy steps, focusing on what you really need to know to get a job done, rather than exotic details most of us don't have the time or patience for. It also comes with a DOS disk filled with additional reference documents and utilities. It's lighthearted, nontechnical, and enjoyable to read.

6. ***Teach Yourself the Internet: Around the World in 21 Days***
By Neil Randall
Published by Sams
ISBN 0-672-30519-4, $27.00
Many books about the Internet focus on individual tools, not how to accomplish a specific task. That approach can work, but that isn't the way many of us learn. We tend to ask questions like, "How can I get travel information online?" and "Where can I find job listings on the Net?" *Teach Yourself the Internet: Around the World in 21 Days* will appeal to those folks, because it's decidedly topic-oriented, not tool-oriented. For instance, if you're interested in reading (or publishing) an online magazine, this book shows you where to go for the goods on Usenet, in mailing lists, and on the World Wide Web. If you're looking for a job, the authors show you not only how to find job listings online, but how to use the Net to research prospective employers and find international job sources. Even if you've been on the Net for years, this book will certainly show you corners you've never imagined.

7. ***The Whole Internet User's Guide and Catalog, second edition***
By Ed Krol
Published by O'Reilly & Associates
ISBN: 1-56592-063-5, $24.95
The Whole Internet User's Guide and Catalog has turned out to be a classic, and the second edition sweetens the pot, having been completely updated to reflect the development of new Internet tools, including Mosaic, MIME, tin, pine, and xarchie. It also includes a wonderful catalog of Internet resources.

8. ***The Internet Yellow Pages***
By Harley Hahn and Rick Stout
Published by Osborne Publishing
ISBN 0-07-882023-5
447 pages, $27.95
The Internet Yellow Pages strives to be an unmatched subject-oriented index to the Internet's resources, a lofty goal given the number of competing indexes available. Of the copious online "yellow-pages" books available, it is obvious that the art department that worked on this one, worked the hardest. *The Internet Yellow Pages'* organization is intuitive and consistent, pointing to high-quality and truly interesting sites to visit.

9. ***The Internet Guide for New Users***
By Daniel P. Dern
Published by McGraw-Hill
ISBN 0-07-016511
570 pages, $27.95
A very complete introduction to the world of the Internet. Along with the obligatory topics such as telnet, FTP, and Archie, the book suggests how to get an Internet account and teaches enough UNIX to survive on the Net. This book is more complete and in-depth than many other Internet books: Dern's deep knowledge of all things Internet shines through, although sometimes the book is a bit too formal. The book, like Dern, is UNIX-centric and laced with dry humor.

10. ***Internet in Plain English***
By Bryan Pfaffenberger
Published by MIS Press
ISBN 1-55828-285-4
460 pages, $19.95
Of the various glossaries and dictionaries of Internet jargon, *Internet in Plain English* is the most complete. Arranged like a dictionary, it defines just about every term you're likely to hear on and about the Internet and UNIX, from "abbrev" to "'zine". It contains a lot of technical terms that tech-heads bandy about relentlessly (like CSO name server, ISDN, and OSI protocol suite) and can give beginners and intermediate users a leg up in understanding what everyone's talking about. ■